1: Maes--47 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32
Sakata FO43

The manufacture of bows and arrows is practiced only by men.

The native chooses the wood for his arrows very carefully. It must be light and very tough. After scraping it carefully with a small knife, he carves one end into a point and cuts a notch at the other end for the bowstring. Both ends are slightly hardened by fire. The part where the vanes are to be attached is scraped with the greatest care. The lines marking the place for the vanes are drawn with the point of the knife, and the vanes are made out of half

Fig. 43. Basakata Armed with Spears, Bow and Arrows.

a feather from the wing of an eagle or guinea fowl. The native sets all [68] three vanes in place at the same time and fastens them with a fiber thread coiled in spirals. This fine ligature is strengthened with bulungu resin which is applied in a liquid state and thus forms a very light sheath when dry.

The arrowhead ends in an elongated, conical socket into which the upper end of the wooden shaft is fitted. The general shape of the head is that of a narrow, oblong leaf, sometimes provided with one or two barbs. This shape is found throughout the Lake Leopold II and Lukenie regions. The notch for the bowstring is quite even and shallow, although among the

276 Of the seven specimens of this type that we collected, only one came from the Banfumungu, while the others belonged to various tribes of the region cited above.

The bowl is usually made of a section of bamboo or the tip from the stem of a banana leaf. All these pipes are of the hookah type.

The one we obtained from the Yaelima has a bowl cut from the kernel of a palm nut. This bowl is glued with a paste of [314] bulungu resin to a bamboo tube whose lower end is cut in the shape of a fork and submerged in the water.

The natives prefer to use this type of pipe for smoking hemp, although we noted more than once that they also use it to smoke tobacco.

The custom of smoking tobacco with a communal pipe does not seem to be practiced much by the peoples of the Fimi-Lukenie. As a rule, each native has a pipe of his own.

Among the tribes of Lake Leopold II, as well as among the Basakata, Bobaie, and Batitu, the tobacco pipe is usually made simply from the rib of a banana leaf. The native often attaches a small earthenware bowl to the lower end of it. This bowl is always very crude, and it is interesting because of its irregular shape which is long, thin, and slightly crooked. The native unquestionably got the idea for this from the shape of the pipe bowls made from the rib of a banana leaf. The latter did not stand up well under use; the bowl was burned as the tobacco was smoked. At first, the native replaced it by another, cut from a harder and tougher piece of wood, but he soon started making the bowls out of baked clay, while retaining the original shape. [158]

Pipes from this region with wooden bowls are very rare. We possess only one, which comes from the Batitu village of Longinpila.

Beyond the Batitu in the Bumbuli region, among the Bokala and Yaelima, the pipe consists of a long wooden tube, usually slightly curved and provided with a small earthenware bowl at one end and a monkey's femur at the other as a mouthpiece.

[53] Sometimes the earthenware bowl is replaced by one of wood, most often decorated with carved designs and often representing a human head. The latter type is very common in the region of Bena Dibele and Kole. Certain specimens are worked with great artistry.

[104] III. WEAVING

286 The craft of the Mongo weaver is an honorable one and one that calls for much labor and attentiveness.

[177] Weaving is no longer as much in vogue as it was in earlier times, because the younger people buy European materials. However, the weaver is still able to earn his daily bread comfortably, because [291] the old people are too pagan to give up their old ingrained habit of wearing a loin cloth.

[462] Weaving is a craft carried on by men only. Some are very skillful in the weaving of materials and command our admiration. Pieces of really beautiful workmanship were offered to us for sale; I had myself seen them being woven.

286 The weaver takes his knife, goes into the forest, and cuts the 314 "mpekwa ia lifeke," the fibers of a certain kind of palm tree which he also sometimes plants on the open highway near his hut. As soon as he has sufficient fibers for the weaving he has in mind, he goes home and at his leisure scrapes the fibers with his knife until they are all of the same thickness.

286 After that he leaves them in the sun to dry. When they have dried sufficiently, he puts up in his hut or on the open highway the frame on which the fibers are to be hung.

After he has attached the fibers to the top cross-bar (they are bound between the top and bottom cross-bars), he holds down the bottom cross-bar with his foot and goes to work.

Often he uses fibers of different colors, and this gives a lovely effect to the piece of material.

Bofomi afom'eto, "the weaver is weaving material."

386 The weaver has a very simple way of giving the fibers their 314 different colors.

From the forest he fetches a liana (longoli) which contains the red, white, or black coloring agent, cuts it in pieces, puts them in a banana leaf which has been quickly scorched in the fire, adds some water and hangs all this, with the fibers, in a bag of banana leaves above the fire. When the dye has soaked thoroughly into the fibers, he has his colored fibers all ready [105] for the material he is about to weave. This mixture is called "bosaka."

Rope-making

283 The Mongo rope-maker (one can hardly call him a professional rope-maker) goes to the forest, fetches fibers from a certain kind of palm-tree, scrapes them nicely with his knife, and puts them in the sun to dry.

Whole coils of rope are made in this way. Native rope, finished in this manner, is of a good, strong quality. Nets for the hunt and also for fishing are made of it. As in the case of weaving, it is something done by the men only.

IV. BASKET AND MAT WEAVING

285 462 The weaving of baskets and mats is chiefly the work of the women, especially the fine braidwork.

The men make only the large, roughly finished baskets needed for the transport of their copal. The braiding of mats is done only by the women.

285 314 From the forest they fetch the twigs of the Bolongote tree, scrape them nicely or dry them in the sun, and, sitting down, braid their baskets and mats.

They make different kinds of baskets, but the raw materials necessary for braiding are the bokombe or likombe of the Bolongote tree.

285 One or two women together braid the mats on the flat ground. The names of the mats are as follows.

[435] 1. Efonzolo, the roughly finished mat (value, five mitakos).

2. Nkongole, the finely braided mat (value, half a franc).

3. Itundo or lofole, the little mat with which the dirt from the road and the ashes from the fire are carried away.

4. Ifefa, the little mat used to fan the fire.

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